tarini, a rich Italian merchant residing in Botolph, were reckoned valuable moveable furniture. And in the riots at Oxford, in 1502, the glass windows were carried away as rich booty by the rioters.* In London, about 1510, Sir Thomas More, in his 'Utopia,' says, that they keep the wind out of their houses with glass, for it is there much used, and some also with very fine linen dipped in oil or amber; and that for two commodities, for by this means more light cometh in, and the wind is better kept out. In religious houses it was common. At Alnwick Castle, in Northumberland, when the earl removed to another house, the glazed sashes were taken out of the window frames, and laid carefully by, in case they should be broken by the winds or other accidents, until 'my lord' again visited his mansion. How the wind and rain were excluded after their removal does not appear.

At the close of the reign of Henry VIII., domestic convenience and comfort had made a little progress. The rooms in the houses of the upper classes were built capacious and lightsome, and the ceilings were often plastered, or formed of boards. Halls, and parlours, and the chief sleeping chambers, were, as in bygone times, hung with tapestry; or they were lined in a manner recently introduced, with boards of a foreign kind of oak, called wainscot. In houses of the inferior gentry and wealthy tradesmen, parlours and the best bed-rooms were hung with arras, or with a kind of painted or sized cloth, made in imitation of it. Stamped or painted leather imported from Flanders was also latterly introduced as a wall lining. The doors were clumsily made and fitted, but well hinged, for Sir Thomas More says those of London would follow the least drawing of a finger: locks were rare, and internal doors opened with a latch and string. Boarded floors in halls and parlours were becoming common.† Rushes and straw, however, still covered and polluted their surface.

PARTY WALLS.

RECENT AWARD UNDER METROPOLITAN BUILDINGS ACT.

The following award involves a question of considerable importance: the papers came into our hands too late to allow us to offer any observations upon them in the present number, but we may return to the subject on another occasion.

On the 16th of June last Mr. Pownall, district surveyor, gave notice to Messrs. Mansfield and Co., builders, "that the works now in progress at the house situate in Lincoln's-inn-fields, No. 54, are not conformable to the statute in the portions thereof under mentioned," and required them within forty-eight hours from the date thereof to amend the same.

Irregularities referred to:—

The rebuilding a portion of the above-mentioned house, consisting of two fronts of such house. The party wall between Nos. 53 and 54 having timbers running through it; and the party division between Nos. 54 and 55 being a timber partition.

Messrs. Mansfield's reply to the information was as follows:—

"As to the party structure situate between Nos. 54 and 55, we submit that such structure runs from east to west, and that the fronts thereof being at right angles thereto and running north and south have neither been taken down or rebuilt, or in any way touched, and therefore that the 33rd section in no way applies; that the building at present erecting is an attached building to No. 54, Lincoln's-inn-fields, situate in Duke-street, more than 17 feet from the party structure, and at direct right angles, and consequently at opposite angles to the party structure.

Inasmuch as the building owners of the south party wall between Nos. 53 and 54 have not required a survey, and the party structure is not so defective or so far out of repair as to render it necessary to pull down and rebuild the same, we consider that the district surveyor has no power to survey the wall under the 25th section."

After numerous hearings, the following award was made:—

* A'Wood. Hist. of Oxford, vol. i. p. 659.

† In Samlesbury Hall it is curious to observe that the upper floors are massive planks, which, instead of crossing, lie parallel to the joists, as if disdaining to be indebted to them for support.—Whitaker, Whalley.

Office of Metropolitan Buildings,
3, Trafalgar-square.

In the matter of the reference by way of information of Mr. George Pownall, District Surveyor, against Messrs. James and George Mansfield, Builders.

With regard to the party-wall dividing and between the houses numbered, and situate and being No. 53 and No. 54, Lincoln's-Inn Fields, and with regard to the party-partition dividing and between the houses numbered, situate and being No. 54 and No. 55, Lincoln's-Inn Fields, the said premises respectively being within the district of St. Giles's-in-the-Fields and St. George's, Bloomsbury, and within the limits of the Metropolitan Buildings Act, 7 & 8 Vict., cap. 84.

We, the Official Referees of Metropolitan Buildings, duly appointed in pursuance of the said Act, having received information from Mr. George Pownall, the surveyor of the said district by virtue of the said Act, that Messrs. James and George Mansfield, of Little James-street, Gray's-Inn Lane, builders, had not amended certain alleged irregularities, mentioned in the Notice of Irregularity hereto annexed, and having on the 19th day of July, 1845, and again by adjournment on the 31st day of July, 1845, duly heard the said George Pownall and the said James and George Mansfield, and their agents in that behalf, at one of which hearings the said George Pownall proved the due service of the said notice on the said Messrs. James and George Mansfield, and the inspection of the work after the expiration of the said notice, and the failure of the parties to amend the same;—

Do hereby determine and award, with respect to the party-wall first above mentioned, that if the said wall be made as nearly as may be practicable in conformity with the provisions of the said Act, relating to the construction and materials of party-walls, by stopping up all openings therein, and by removing therefrom such timber and wood-work now lying in or running through the said wall, as is not by the said Act allowed to be laid or placed in the substance of party-walls, and by making good the said wall, such party-wall may remain, and need not be pulled down or rebuilt, nor need an external wall be built against such party-wall.

And with respect to the said party-partition, inasmuch as the portions of the back-front of the said house No. 54, which have been taken down and rebuilt, do not adjoin the said party-partition, we make no direction thereon.

And with regard to the costs and expenses attending this proceeding, we, the said Official Referees, do hereby further award:—

First; As to the fees and expenses of the office of metropolitan buildings, that on or before the 23rd day of August, instant, the sum of 14*l.* 3*s.* 11*d.* be paid to the Registrar of Metropolitan Buildings at the said office, No. 3, Trafalgar-square, London, and that such sum be so paid in the first instance by the said James and George Mansfield and the said George Pownall, or by either of them; and that if such sum be paid by the said George Pownall, he shall be entitled to claim and be repaid the same by the said James and George Mansfield.

Secondly; As to the costs and expenses of the said George Pownall as such surveyor as aforesaid, that on or before the said 23rd day of August, instant, the said James and George Mansfield do pay to the said George Pownall the sum of 5*l.* 5*s.*, at his office, at No. 14, Upper King-street, Holborn, in the said district.

In witness whereof we, the said Official Referees, have to this our award, on three pages of foolscap paper, set our hands this 15th day of August, 1845. James W. Higgins,
William Hoskins.

Artificial Stone.—We learn from the *Athenæum*, that an architect at Augsburgh, Herr Alois Steiermann, has invented an artificial stone which for solidity is said to surpass the best free-stone, is one-third its cost, and to which any form can be given in the manufacture. It is composed of river-sand, clay, and a cement whose composition is the inventor's secret. It has been submitted to the proof of air, pressure, and fire, and resists them all. The king of Bavaria has given his gold medal of civil merit to Herr Steiermann, for this useful invention.

STAINED GLASS WINDOW IN ST. JAMES'S CHURCH.

Mr. Editor, with regret as an amateur of the fine arts, I have read the unhappy conclusion to which the committee of taste have come, as touching the stained-glass window in St. James's church, Piccadilly.

Are we ever in this country to get out of trammels as regard architecture and the fine arts?

Thus, some writers designate *Gothic* architecture as *Christian* architecture, and decry all churches built in the Grecian, Roman, or Italian style as Paganism. As if devotion was not congenial with the splendid churches of Germany, St. Paul's in London, or St. Peter's, at Rome. Whilst others declare that because Greece and Rome had no *stained glass* in ancient time, so putting stained glass in a Grecian or Italian built church must be anathematized as bad taste; ideas, in my humble opinion, nothing better than vapouring puerilities, to which no man who has a relish for art ought for a single moment to lend an ear.

The love of antiquarianism at the present day approaches *monomania*. Not only are church windows glazed without subjects to interest the mind or heart, but to *tabernacle work* and *grim figures in niches* are also sometimes added affected *corrosions* of the stains of time!! a true smack of what was formerly called "*The Smell fungus School*."

What may a true love of art in matters pictorial be termed, but a zest for the delineation of nature in its highest, truest, and most perfect state, whether it be in animated subjects or still-life? The rest is mere conventionality. Window glass, of all colours, when it comes from the furnace is diaphanous, and if objects in nature are described upon it, *architecture*, *animal*, or *vegetable* life, its real beauty consists in the *truth* of what it intends to describe, not in a *dirty obscurity*.

But the windows of the smell-fungus school must often excite a smile of pity. Cherubim like monkeys, bishops like mummies, and saints like chimney-sweepers with their faces and robes as dirty as if they had been up the chimney. How different the taste and execution of stained-glass in the churches of *Munich*!!! But we are in trammels. *Westminster Hall* is forbidden ground to the splendid artists of the schools of *Hesse* and of *Cornelius*.

The *protective* system, as regards *art*, is still maintained by Sir Robert Peel in all its intensity. Our youthful aspirants of the pencil are not allowed to profit by a view of what a foreign school can do; and *foreign* talent and *foreign* genius are by Sir Robert put into the same category with the threads and tapes of *foreign* manufacture—what an Augustan age!

The poor artist, fettered by the *res angustæ domi*, can know nothing of foreign power and execution, and is thus left to *fancy* that art can be perfectionized intuitively. The authorities of Hamburg want to build a splendid church; they do not call confining art to their own people "patriotism," but, like true lovers of genius, invite competition from *all* nations, and England gains the wreath.

The Prince de Joinville offers to sailors of *all* nations 1,500 francs as a prize for rowing a six-oar sea boat—the sailors from Portsmouth row, and gain the wreath.

Is England alone to consider talent and genius as necessarily circumscribed to the place of its birth? Whatever the *Government* may do, the *people*, I feel assured, repudiate such narrow-minded ideas, and I trust the day is fast arriving when our "powers that be" will no longer tell Talent and Genius that their portals are hermetically sealed against them. Genius is the common property of the world, and ought in all branches to find in England an affectionate welcome.

I am, Sir, &c.
Neiton. W. Mason.

P.S. Though not of "the *smell fungus school*" I beg no one will impute to me a distaste to the *Gothic*. I passionately admire art and architecture in "*all*" its varieties.

Consuming of Smoke.—The Government has appointed Mr. Faraday and Professor Playfair to ascertain how far it is possible to consume the smoke from steam-engine chimneys.

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